Guide to Assessment Reports

The 2003 Assessment data is ready for verification. Once you review the data and notify us of any discrepancies, we will make any necessary adjustments and then post the data for public view. Until data has all been verified, you will only be able to see the data for your own school or district.

What you will need to complete the verification

You will need the user name and password that were mailed to your district for use with Annual Data Collection, Child Count, and other Citrix applications. If your user name and password don't work, make sure you have the latest password, which was mailed July 7.

The School Summary report from Riverside Publishing, which you received in May or June, contains summary counts and scoring for each school in your district. Only a few numbers in the report need to be checked against those contained in OPI's database for this initial comparison. In most cases, you should be able to complete the entire comparison in a few minutes per school. If you discover disparities that need to be resolved, the process will take longer.

Why it is important that you verify your numbers

The data presented on the Web for district review will be released to the public in mid-August, 2003, and it is in everyone's interest that it be as clean and accurate as possible by that time.

We at OPI have made every effort to assure that the numbers you receive are accurate, but mistakes are always possible. In most cases, the results you see will be identical to those you received from Riverside Publishing, but in a few cases, OPI corrected errors of coding entered at the school level during testing or elsewhere in the process. For that reason, the numbers posted to the Web may not match exactly with those you received in the reports. If you have questions about how we arrived at the numbers on the Web, now is the time to get them straightened out.

What if my data *doesn't* match the printed report?

Several different conditions could result in differences between the School Summary report you received and what you see in the IRIS report. The following is a list of common discrepancies:
• **The count of students tested is the same between the School Summary and IRIS, but NCE scores or NPR rankings differ by 1.** For example, NCE equals 58 in Riverside Publishing report, but is either 57 or 59 in IRIS. Scores that differ by a single point are relatively rare but seem resistant to any amount of analysis. Some scores come out a point higher, others a point lower. In terms of uncertainty in the test, the scoring, and other factors, the differences are not considered significant and there is no need to contact OPI about them.

• **The number of students shown as having taken the test, the Tested Count, differs between the School Summary and IRIS, and the NCE and NPR scores are also significantly different.** The usual cause of larger differences in student count and scores is incorrect coding of answer documents at the school level when the test was given. For example, assume that one school entered a name for its *district* that differed from the name entered by the other schools. The district name is used by Riverside Publishing as a grouping criterion, so the resulting scores will appear on two different School Summary reports instead of one.

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The state accountability system uses the legal identification of a district and its member schools for long-term data stability, and the seemingly separate district or school will have been recoded by our processing before the student records were rolled up into totals. This correction is most noticeable for those schools reporting assessment data from attendance centers separate from those of other district schools.

• **The list of schools with summaries is different from the number shown in the screen display.** See the previous discussion about naming for districts and schools. If your list of summaries is different, it probably means that a school was reported as separate when it actually should have been reported as part of another school. This can happen if a school occupies a different building or other facility, and is reported by a program or building name, rather than the name of the school to which it actually belongs.

If your reports and ours do not match, please contact one of the following people by July 30, 2003:
Judy Snow, State Assessment Director, (406) 444-3656, jsnow@state.mt.us.
Mike Chapman, Research and Analysis Manager, (406) 444-4527, mchapman@state.mt.us.
Vicki Thacker, Research and Analysis Manager, (406) 444-6712, vthacker@state.mt.us.
Kevin Boice, Programmer/Analyst, (406) 444-0764, kboice@state.mt.us.

## Whom do I contact with questions or concerns?

For problems with user names and passwords, contact the OPI Help Desk at (406) 444-3448. Passwords will not be given out over the phone or email, but we can mail a copy to the district office.

For questions about data, interpretation of scores, copying data to spreadsheet or database, printing, or corrections made at OPI, contact Mike Chapman, Research and Analysis Manager, (406) 444-4527, mchapman@state.mt.us.

For questions about the testing schedule or matters of policy, contact Judy Snow, State Assessment Director, (406) 444-3656, jsnow@state.mt.us.

How do I get started?

1. Go to the OPI web page at www.opi.state.mt.us.
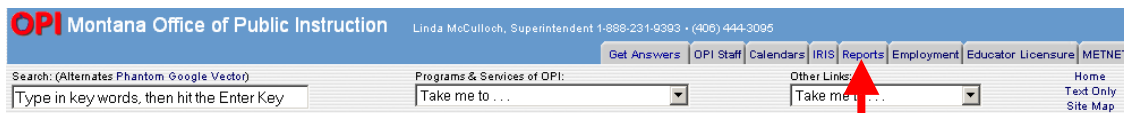
2. Click on the tab that says Reports.

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3. Click on Assessment to expand the menu options.
4. Choose Secure Data.

5. You will need the user name and password that was mailed to you for use with the Annual Data Collection and Child Count reporting. A new password was mailed July 7.
6. Enter your user name and password into the two bottom boxes. The password is case sensitive, so make sure you enter it exactly as it was given to you.
7. For verification purposes, choose the correct school year from the **Year** dropdown list. Leave the other dropdown lists at the default values.
8. Click *Show tabular report*.
9. Use the scroll bars at the right and bottom of the screen to view the entire report.
10. Clicking on Back will return you to this screen so you can choose different criteria and create a new report.
11. See instructions below for creating an Excel spreadsheet so you can print the report.
12. Click on the Get Answers button for answers to commonly asked questions about the Assessment reports.

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Create Excel

If you experience difficulty printing the report directly from IRIS, or if you would like to save the report for any other purpose:
- Click on the *Create Excel* button at the bottom of the report.
- The report opens in a new window in spreadsheet format.
- Choose File/Save As
  - Select the folder (on your computer) where you want to save the report
  - Create a file name for the report
  - Select file type (Excel is the best choice, if available)
  - Click OK
- Navigate to the saved file and open it.
- Follow the instructions for your application to move rows or columns, set print area and print your data.

Print the report – an alternate method

You may experience difficulty in printing the report directly from IRIS. If you are unable to follow the above instructions for saving the report as an Excel spreadsheet, this process may be useful. Copy and paste the data you would like to print into a spreadsheet, word processing document or database. You can sort and manipulate the data as you like and then print. A spreadsheet is the easiest choice.

1. Highlight the rows of data you wish to copy.
2. Choose Edit/Copy from the menu bar, or press Ctrl+C.
3. Open your spreadsheet application and place the cursor in the upper left cell.
4. Choose Edit/Paste from the menu bar or press Ctrl+V.
5. Follow the instructions for your application to move rows or columns, set print area and print your data.

Glossary, Display Options, and the Get Answers button

- Clicking on **Display Options** (under Index on the left) takes you to a Setup screen where you can change some display options. Most users will not need to change the display options.

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- Click on **Glossary** (under Assessment) to view definitions of each column heading in the report. To return to the report, click on **Back**.
- When you click on the **Get Answers** button on any screen, you will launch the OPI Knowledge Database where we have entered frequently asked questions and answers about these Assessment Reports. If the current selections don't answer your question, choose Ask a Question and submit it to OPI. The OPI will make every effort to see that you receive a response within 48 hours.

Close IRIS Reports

Click the X in the upper right-hand corner of the browser window to end the session when you have finished.

Thank you

Thank you for taking time to view the Assessment data; we hope you found it useful.

The Montana Office of Public Instruction advises:

1. that these scores reflect one test, a test that measures achievement and comparison with a national norm group;
2. that the number of students tested affects the data: the larger the number, the more generalizable the data, and the smaller the number, the less generalizable the data because one or two students in a small group can dramatically impact the results. Therefore, comparing the different size districts and schools continues to be problematic; and
3. that to get a full picture of Montana student achievement, other factors need to be considered. Multiple measures, part of the Montana Comprehensive Assessment (MontCAS) Plan, will add other instruments.